

REMARKS

This communication responds to the Office Action dated July 14, 2010.

Claims 1, 14, 22, 28, 33, 42, 48 and 55 are amended, no claims are canceled, and no claims are added herein. As a result, claims 1-11, 14-17, 21-29 and 31-59 are now pending in this application.

The Rejection of Claims Under § 101

Claims 14-17, 28-29, 31-32, 40-41 and 55-59 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed application is allegedly directed to non-statutory subject matter. Applicants have amended the specification at page 7 lines 4-14 by removing “*by way of data signals embodied in a carrier wave or other propagation medium*”, and thus believe that this amendment has overcome the rejection. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the §101 rejection of claims 14-17, 28-29, 31-32, 40-41 and 55-59 are thus respectfully requested.

The Rejection of Claims Under § 103

Claims 1-8, 11, 14-17, 21-29, 31-45, 47-51, and 53-58 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Epinions.com in view of Petras et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2001/0047290, hereinafter “Petras”).

Claims 9-10, 46, 52, and 59 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Epinions.com in view of Petras and in further view of Aho et al. (Data Structures and Algorithms, hereinafter “Aho”). Applicants traverse these rejections.

Independent claims 1, 14, 22, 28, 33, 42, 48 and 55:

Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 14, 22, 28, 33, 42, 48 and 55 similarly. For example, amended independent claim 1 reads in part, “**derivinga community rating uniquely corresponding to a particular user by aggregating an individual feedback rating associated with the particular user and one or more individual feedback ratings associated with one or more users referred by the particular user to the online trading community**”. This amendment is made for clarification, and not for reasons related to patentability. The

support for this amendment can be found at least at page 9 lines 5-23 of the specification and FIG. 2 of the Application. No new matter has thus been entered.

Applicants respectfully submit that Epinions.com does not teach or suggest the above quoted feature as recited in amended independent claim 1. As illustrated in FIG. 2 of the Application, for example, a member “dygsp” 126 refers member “antiques” 127 to the online community, and community rating 236 (+39) of the member “dygsp” 126 may be obtained as an aggregation (or a sum) of feedback rating 136 (+18) of the member “dygsp” 126 and feedback rating 137 (+21) of the other member “antiques” 127. The Office Action does not point out and Applicants cannot find any portion of Epinions.com that discloses this feature as recited in amended independent claim 1. Nowhere does Epinions.com disclose that a feedback rating for a member is aggregated to the feedback rating of a particular member who refers the member to the community. Using the example of member “Bonies7,” Epinions.com does not disclose that a feedback rating of Bonies7 is aggregated to a feedback rating of a particular member who refers Bonies7 to the community to determine a community rating associated with the particular member. Instead, Epinions merely discloses that the other users may provide a response indicating he/she trusts the originator (first user) of the review and may indicate an approval level of the individual reviews provided by the originator (first user) (e.g., “very useful”).

At least for this reason, Epinions.com cannot disclose the above quoted feature as recited in amended independent claim 1.

Neither Petras nor Aho cures this defect of Epinions.com. At least for this reason, even when combined, Epinions.com, Petras, and Aho do not teach or suggest the above quoted feature as recited in amended independent claim 1.

The above argument presented with respect to amended independent claim 1 also applies to amended independent claims 14, 22, 28, 33, 42, 48 and 55, which have features similar to amended independent claim 1. Accordingly, the cited references (Epinions.com, Petras, and Aho) do not render amended independent claims 14, 22, 28, 33, 42, 48 and 55 obvious.

All dependent claims from these independent claims are also nonobvious, since any claim depending from a nonobvious independent claim is also nonobvious. *See* M.P.E.P. § 2143.03.

It is therefore respectfully requested that the rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be reconsidered and withdrawn.

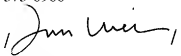
CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are in condition for allowance, and notification to that effect is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (612) 373-6966 to facilitate prosecution of this application. If necessary, please charge any additional fees or deficiencies, or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 19-0743.

Respectfully submitted,

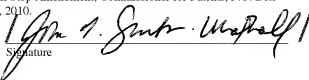
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Date 10/14/2010

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CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8: The undersigned hereby certifies that this correspondence is being filed using the USPTO's electronic filing system EFS-Web, and is addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on this 14 day of October, 2010.

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